THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

NEWS

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World-renowned Artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude to Lecture in Cleveland on May 23

Lecture Presented by The Womens Council of The Cleveland Museum of Art

CLEVELAND (Jan. 13, 2005) — The Womens Council of The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) announces a lecture by internationally acclaimed artists, **Christo and Jeanne-Claude on Tuesday, May 23, 2006, at 7 p.m. at Severance Hall.** In addition, the evening will feature a question and answer session and a book signing. This lecture is a continuation of the Womens Council's Speakers Series which featured contemporary artist and professor Faith Ringgold in 2004.

Tickets are available for $45; CMA members $35; and $5 for students with a valid ID by calling the Severance Hall Box Office at (216) 231-1111 or 1-800-686-1411 or online at www.cma.org.

Widely known for their recent project, **The Gates, Central Park, New York City, 1979-2005**, in which the artists installed 7,503 fabric panels transforming Central Park into a series of saffron-colored, fabric pathways, Christo and Jeanne-Claude will be discussing their upcoming project, **Over the River**. Consisting of fabric panels suspended horizontally high above the water level of the Arkansas River in Colorado, Over the River will meander between Cañon City and Salida. The 6.7-mile expanse of successive panels will follow the river's path for 14 days and will be interrupted by bridges, rocks, trees and bushes and for aesthetic reasons, creating abundant flows of light. On schedule to be completed in summer 2009, the Arkansas River was chosen because of its high banks so that steel cables could be suspended. Christo and Jeanne-Claude traveled nearly 14,000 miles over the course of three years to select the appropriate site for the project.

Born on the same hour in June of 1935, Christo and Jeanne-Claude conceive their projects together and pay the entire cost of the artworks themselves. The temporary large-scale environmental works they create have elements of painting, sculpture, architecture and urban planning. Sometimes confused as "wrapping" the artists more accurately describe their works as alterations to the natural environment.

Christo studied at the Fine Arts Academy in Sofia from 1953-56 and escaped from Prague to the West in early 1957. Jeanne-Claude was educated in France and Switzerland, and earned degrees in philosophy and Latin from the University of Tunis. The couple met in Paris in 1958 when Christo was commissioned to do a portrait of Jeanne-Claude's mother.

(more)

The pair have been working together since their first temporary outdoor work entitled **Dockside Packages, Cologne Harbor, 1961** and have since created or conceptualized more than two dozen such installations around the world. Their installations are labors of love, some of them taking more than 25 years from conception to completion because of the necessary permissions that must be obtained when creating such grand outdoor works.

The expenses associated with their works are enormous, yet Christo and Jeanne-Claude do not accept sponsorship, commissions or any public funds. In addition, the artists do not accept volunteers for their projects; every person working on one of their installations is paid a nominal wage. The expense of their projects is borne from the sale of all the preparatory drawings, sketches, scale models, etc. from their previous projects. The artists feel that this affords them a feeling of freedom and integrity for their works.

Support for this lecture has been provided by Jo-Ann Fabrics.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The Museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the Museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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